

West Bay Corridor

at North Kingstown Community Center
June 12, 2003 from 6:30pm to 9:00pm

Approximately 25 residents of the West Bay corridor attended the public workshop on June 10, 2003. There were representatives from the TAC, Sierra Club and planning departments of Cranston and East Greenwich.

- 8 participants were from North Kingstown
- 2 participants were from Providence
- 2 participants were from Warwick
- 2 participants were from East Greenwich
- 2 participants were from South Kingstown
- 1 participant was from Exeter
- 1 participant was from Cranston

Corridor Municipalities

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| • Cranston | • Providence |
| • East Greenwich | • South Kingstown |
| • Exeter | • Warwick |
| • Narragansett | • West Warwick |
| • North Kingstown | |

Major Roads of the Corridor

- Heading south - Gateway to South County
- Heading north – Major commuter routes to Providence metropolitan area
- Urban in the north, suburb in middle, rural in southern portions
- Connects town and village centers including Narragansett Pier, Wakefield, Wickford, East Greenwich and Apponaug, all destinations

Route 1

- Focused on automobile use
- Few users of bus routes, except # 14 bus
- Generally not pedestrian or bicycle friendly
- Summer beach traffic
- Trucking and freight route → Quonset
 - Ferry to Martha's Vineyard (MV)
- Connection to URI
- School bus route
- TF Green Airport and Goddard Park

Route 1A

- Access to local beaches and URI Bay Campus
- Residential setting
- Scenic drive and bay views
- A destination in and of itself

Route 4

- Commuter route
 - Access to Route 95
 - Connector to Route 1 and Route 95 to Providence metro area
- Access to Quonset
- Not a 'destination' road like Route 1A
- Gateway to South County attractions
- Bottlenecks at lights
- Lots of thru traffic

Route 2

- Alternative to Route 1 travel (south of Route 4)
- Alternative route to URI
- Dual characteristics:
 - north of East Greenwich- heavy commercial development, highly congested, including malls and Garden City
 - south of East Greenwich- less intensively developed with offices and light commercial nodes
- Overflow from Route 4
- Access to Ladd Center in Exeter

Route 102

- Ten Rod Road
- Scenic parts of road (Exeter, RI)
- Used by those coming East (via CT) to Newport
- Main connector to Route 1 and Route 4 and then into Providence metro area

Other modes of transportation in the Corridor

Bus

- Park and Rides are used for commuting

Air

- TF Green Airport

Ferry

- New seasonal ferry to MV
- Ferry out of Pt Judith to Block Island

Bike

- Warwick/East Greenwich Bicycle Network

Using the Corridor Roads

Participants described the corridor as **rapidly expanding** with new growth and getting 'busier each day'. The corridor's land-use is **diverse** and changes from a semi-rural corridor in the southern half to urban in the northern half. The corridor has historic areas with small villages. The area has destination attractions but is also a commuter route to Providence and Newport.

The West Bay area is highly dependent on the use of automobiles to commute and travel within the corridor. There are few public transportation options to the various destinations and intermodal facilities in the area including, beaches, ferries, airport and Quonset.

Positive Features of the Corridor

The West Bay Corridor consists of cities, towns and small village centers that emanate historic New England charm. The area has many amenities including its coastal location, scenic views, recreational opportunities and easy commute to Providence metro area while still having areas that are rural.

Positive features also include:

- Good schools
- Recreation – golf courses
- Trails for hiking and biking
- Access to beaches and boating
- Less snow than the northwest part of the state
- Access to highways, airport and other transportation modes
- Retail, entertainment and medical facilities

Issues with the Corridor Roads

As much as residents enjoy the benefits of the corridor, they stated concerns about safety, deteriorating aesthetics, environmental impacts and increased growth in the area. Problems include:

Traffic/Congestion/Access Management/Safety

Route 4

- Speed limits are not enforced
- Intersections with Route 95 congested and dangerous
- Route 4 and Route 95 interchange needs review
- Connections needed to Route I-95
- Congestion commuting north in the mornings

Route 1

- Interchange with 138 to Newport dangerous traffic configuration
- Route 1 and Route 4 merge problems
- Left turn for Shady Lea is dangerous as are all crossovers on Route 1
- Route 138 West connecting to Route 1 needs additional turning lanes
- Gilbert Stuart and Sherman Town Roads have a high number of accidents
- Traffic lights create back-ups, especially beach traffic
- Center turn-arounds are dangerous
- Not pedestrian friendly (except East Greenwich)
- Pedestrians crossing at bus stops
- Tower Hill Road and Route 1 intersection is a bottleneck

Routes 4 and 1 – Access Management

- As area grows there is a major increase in traffic and congestion
- 'Suicide turns' with center median cuts
- Frequent congestion and traffic during rush hour
- Frequent bottlenecks

- Route 4 and Route 95
- Route 1 and Route 138
- Intersection of Route 1 and Route 4

Route 1A

- Intersection with Hamilton Allenton Road and Route 1A is a problem
- Intersection with Route 102 needs better definition
- Fairly good connections between Routes 1 and 2 (Routes 37, 102, 113, 117, 138, 401, 402 and 403, Coweseh Rd. and Division St.)

Route 2

- Unsafe for pedestrians
- Excessive congestion in Warwick and West Warwick
- Configuration of lights in Warwick

Aesthetics

- Area becoming too commercial and too densely developed
- Loss of open space
- Too many big boxes

Environmental

- New developments could contaminate ground water
- Sole source aquifer in the area could be damaged

Transit

- Lack of commuter rail options and difficulty in funding
- No bus service to Quonset
- Limited access to summer attractions including beaches
- Airport connections from South County not effective
- URI needs to find alternative transportation for students

Land Use and Growth

- Concern for developments at Route 1 in South Kingston and Route 2 in North Kingston are changing local character of area.
- Towns seek commercial development (which creates sprawl) to increase tax base.

Route 2

- Too much expansion of high density commercial development
- Pressures for increased development to accommodate new growth

Route 1

- Becoming too commercial
- Open space being bought-up for 'big box' development

Quonset

- Expansion could impact all area roads and increase congestion, traffic and freight
- Lack of Route 4 and Route 95 South interchange may hinder development at Quonset and impact East Greenwich and Warwick.

Route 403

- Needs to be completed

Issues Identified by Participants at End of Session

At the conclusion of the visioning session, participants were presented with a list of issues and asked to prioritize them. The following chart represents their priorities.

